

Approved
REGULAR MEETING
MARCH 21, 2016

The Wethersfield Town Council held a meeting on March 21, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Town Hall.

Present: Councilors Bello, Hemmann, Hurley, Latina, Martino, Rell, Spinella, Deputy Mayor Barry and Mayor Montinieri.

Also Present: Kathy Bagley, Director , Parks & Recreation; Mike Turner, Town Engineer; Brook Berry, Library Director; Erica Texeira, Assistant Director of Social & Youth Services; Stephanie Askeland , Director, Human Resources; Sally Katz, Director of Physical Services; Michael Emmett, Superintendent of Schools; Fred Bushey, Director School Facilities; Sally Dastoli, Director of Curriculum and Instruction; Diane Fitzpatrick, Board of Education; Charles Brown, Director of Health; Angela Colantonio, Wethersfield Representative of Health District; Jeff Bridges, Town Manager and Dolores Sassano, Town Clerk

All stood for the pledge of allegiance to the flag which was led by Councilor Spinella.

Proclamation for 2016 National Public Health Week – presented to Director Charles Brown by Mayor Paul Montinieri. Director Brown asked Wethersfield representative to the district, Angela Colantonio, to read a statement she had prepared:

Good evening Mayor Montinieri and members of the town council. On behalf of the Board of Health for the Central CT Health District I thank you for recognizing National Public Health Week in Wethersfield. As the proclamation states, the theme of this year's National Public Health Week is healthiest nation in one generation. Americans are living 20 years longer than their grandparents' generation and the public health community is uniquely positioned to ensure that residents experience a long and healthy life. This includes the work of our local health department to prevent illness and injury, promote healthy lifestyles and environments, and protect public health against emergencies or disasters. But it also involves the work of many other stakeholders in the town: schools can provide healthy environments in which young people can learn and grow; town planners can design neighborhoods that encourage walking and bike riding and police officers can ensure that these areas are safe places to be active; restaurants can offer healthier choices on their menus and residents can grow vegetables in their backyard. Therefore, during the first week in April I hope everyone celebrates the important role they play in public health and takes steps to ensure that we become the healthiest town we can be by 2030. I've been serving on the Board of Health for two years and if I have the privilege to serve another 14, I look forward to being a part of helping this vision become a reality.

Recognition of retiring Town Engineer Michael Turner read by Mayor Montinieri.

The Wethersfield's Board of Education's 2017 Budget request was presented by Superintendent of Schools, Michael Emmett. The proposed budget was approved unanimously by the Board of Education at their March 8, 2016 meeting. The budget for 2016-2017 is \$57,485,100. Amount of Increase is \$1,110,153 for a 1.97%.

Mr. Matthew Kozaka, Business Manager, was invited to the podium for questions.

Councilor Hemmann asked how many retirements were taken into account in this budget.

Mr. Emmett indicated that originally there were 4 and now there currently are 8.

Councilor Hemmann stated that there was a category called homeless transportation and asked for an explanation.

Mr. Emmett stated that if they have a student that is homeless under the McKinney Vento Homeless Act we as a district if we are the school of origin, then we are responsible to provide transportation which is a legal mandate.

Councilor Hurley asked what the differential is that's baked in for retirements?

Mr. Kozaka commented that using a mean 16-17 teacher salary about \$82,000 and with the 8 retirements we also have 6 individuals who have a degree change so net is really only about \$25,000 savings. Top level is almost at \$95,000 next year.

Councilor Hurley asked what the number for the Transition Academy came out to be.

Mr. Emmett indicated \$60,000. And once in that location they will be looking to offset that cost.

Councilor Hurley asked about the two elementary teachers that were hired this year but they are still instrumental to next year.

Mr. Emmett stated that they would look to go out and hire at the beginning step if they could.

Councilor Hurley asked if the cost would be in this budget year.

Mr. Emmett stated that cost was not included this year. These were added to the budget so they are carried to next year's budget.

Councilor Hurley stated that in the charter it says that the details that are given should be a projection for the prior year so that we can really see where the budget is presently. He didn't think they had gotten that. The current year projection and the proposed 2016-17 budget. He requested it be done.

Mr. Kozaka indicated that could be added. Every month during our Finance Subcommittee we have the current year reforecast and we can add a column for the 2016-17 budget.

Councilor Rell asked that there was a request for one additional **Scientific Research-Based Interventions (SRBI)** and it was mentioned that there was a state mandate on that. He was wondering how many we have in the school system right now.

Mr. Emmett stated that what winds up happening with the SRBI process which is a multifaceted approach that includes the principal, the classroom teacher; it could include the social worker, the psychologist, special education teacher, the reading specialist and each individual school will meet regarding students based upon data they have. That team will put strategies in place. Strategies might be carried out within the classroom which would be a Tier 1 intervention or it may become a Tier 2 intervention which would be a pull out with a tutor or it could become a Tier 3 which is then a referral to special education.

The request was from the elementary principals to have a coordinator who would oversee the data management and help carry out these meetings and then track the data which we do not currently have. Right now each school does their own based upon their own schedule. The cost of a qualified teacher

with benefits would probably be \$80,000 range.

Councilor Martino commented that electricity shows an increase of \$38,441 and he thought it should go down because of the high school being done. It says the electricity is based on the prior year projections and the current year estimates. Both of those years, you had contractors there using utilities causing the rates to go up and next year's fiscal budget they will only be there through September or October so instead of a full year it should be a quarter of a year. Electricity there should be more efficient because you have the LED lighting, the solar sensors, more energy efficient equipment in there, the window air conditioners are gone and you have the air top units. We are going to be getting a rebate which you only get if you show your utilities going down by 25%. So he is wondering why they are looking for more money next year where in this year's budget looking at your line item, you have already yanked some money out of there for other programs.

Mr. Emmett stated that this summer the high school will be under construction. It's going to be three phases essentially combined into one. Even though there will be no students there, it will be hopping. There are multiple stages that are going to be used and we're talking July 1st on and he thinks it would be premature to make that decision to reduce the electricity until we have this project completely done. Right now the date he has from the contractor is on or around October 28 and he would be remised if he didn't think it would go a little longer than that based on the history that we have had. We haven't gotten anything back on time yet other than the 200 and 400 wing which we got back in January. So I think ultimately we will see the level of savings but right now as it is we don't have a lot of balance within our heating and air conditioning systems and there is still a lot of commissioning work that needs to be done. To cut back on electricity now when he has three phases left, he thinks it's premature.

Councilor Martino questioned that the contractor is going to be there for only a third of the year versus a full year and the projection is based on a full year so you are saying that in four months the contractor is going to use a full year's worth of utilities.

Mr. Emmett stated he doesn't know what the contractor will use but he would rather air on the side of caution based upon their experiences.

Councilor Martino commented that he doesn't see how we will get a rebate back if this doesn't go down. He asked that Mr. Emmett look at those numbers again for when they come back on April 18 and justify this increase especially when currently you are pulling some stuff out so if anything you should be going down to this years or a little less. He also asked that he check on the heating usage as well to see if that should be going down because of efficiencies that's taken place and because they will be out of there before the heavy winter months so hopefully those new boilers and furnaces will reduce some of those costs so he asked if he could do a projection on that as well. During the budget workshops The Transition Academy had come in at \$40,000 and now it is at \$60,000. Was that based on an estimate and now that's the actual number that came in. Looking at the handout you gave us on page 58 you had placeholder numbers in for life insurance and disability insurance and asked if they expect to have these final numbers by the 18th. He was wondering if any of the non-education furniture would be able to be used in the other schools and Mr. Emmett replied no. He asked if the printing and binding of the municipal report could be done in-house and Mr. Emmett replied it is done outside because they don't have the facilities and capability to do it. The bus transportation expense for sports shows a \$10,000 reduction from the current year. Last year it was increased an additional \$15,000 over the previous year which also had the non-use of the gym or fields for home games. This year you had some home games and for next year all the home games will be available because all the fields will be up and running. Why

is it only \$10,000 and not more because all the fields not being used you would ask for an additional

\$15,000 on top of what you had already and our price of diesel and gas has gone down and he was wondering why this number hadn't gone down.

Mr. Emmett responded that part of the reason is that he has struggled to find a bus driver beyond what he already has. If he can't find a bus driver to drive the athletic bus then he has to get the kids to the athletic event somehow. It has been a real struggle to get a driver this year because he has had two drivers retire so they are down to one.

Councilor Martino asked that based on the current year budget to actual; at the end of this year there might be a surplus. Were there some items in this year's budget that you can project with your Budget and Finance Committee to look at paying out of this year's budget to reduce next year's budget to have a lower percentage.

Mr. Emmett responded that they are meeting with the Finance and Information Management Committee prior to the Board meeting tomorrow and they will talk about their variance for the remainder of this year and talk about what we potentially would look to spend down on this year's budget and what we could put into the 1% Reserve. The 1% Reserve Fund was developed by Council and we have put money into it for both years of its existence and we certainly look to put money into it again this year. What is nice about that is he can reduce on the maintenance side knowing that there is a cushion there just in case something big comes down; if we have a major plumbing issue or a heating system that goes down, we have the money there. We have every intention to look if the variance remains to be what it is; we certainly look to be able to buy some of the items this year reducing next year's budget and then still making sure we contribute to the 1% Reserve.

Councilor Martino asked if they could figure out by the 18th how much would go into the 1% Reserve and how much is left over that could be used to reduce other items by purchasing this year vs. next year.

Mr. Emmett responded that they would do everything they can to have a stable number for Council.

Deputy Mayor Barry asked if they had a general figure in terms of surplus of where we are at for the first nine months.

Mr. Kozaka replied that through the end of February they are at about 360.

Mr. Spinella stated that both Mr. Emmett and the Chairperson of Board of Education listed security as the number one priority of the budget and he was wondering how they were able to arrive at such a drastic reduction than was asked for by Mr. Even.

Mr. Emmett responded that one of the things they looked at is what they have in the district and what they have in terms of infrastructure. One of things they were able to do this year we added in the Raptor System so we have a visitor management system in all of our buildings which we piloted at Charles Wright last year. When we had the situation over at Highcrest, one of the things we felt was important that we expanded that Raptor system out. One of the ideas of having the additional clerk at the elementary level would be that they have a second person there to be able to monitor that Raptor system so they have two people in the office. It is hard when you have to balance and quite frankly he would like to come to you and say I would like a 10% increase and I would like to get everything I need. He has to balance that. He would love to have a security guard in every single building, but there is a cost factor to that. Two years ago right after Newtown had taken place, we were looking for a Director of Security and we were looking for five security guards at the elementary level. We didn't get anything that year and were just able to get the Director of Security, Mr. Even, on board who has done a remarkable job in enhancing the safety features that we have in our buildings. He would love to have a total of 8, but it just

doesn't meet the orifices of the budget. We are trying to balance and trying to get something for everybody and with the requests we put in, we tried to touch upon the High School, the Middle School and the Elementary. One of the things that we are fortunate to have here in Wethersfield is at both the High School as well as the Middle School is having School Resource Officers (SROs). We also have a very strong partnership with the Wethersfield Police Department and they have been very responsive to any of our needs. So what you see this year with regard to two, you will see the request for three more next year to round that out. He thinks it's important that they address that and he thinks that's an area of weakness but he has to try and strike a balance.

Councilor Spinella asked what's the envision of this floating person.

Mr. Emmett explained that the floating person would be rotating to each of the five elementary schools. We already have security at the Middle and High School. This person would be exclusive to the elementary schools, when there is a parent or public event, that individual would float to that particular school. They would do regular checks of each of the buildings making sure that we are looking at doors and windows and we are looking for any opportunities where there is weakness. One of the things we did this year at Highcrest, for example, is we put in a window film. You have this 1969-1970 open classroom, which from a security standpoint had some weaknesses; we were able to install window film so we have created an extra level of security. We also increased and enhanced the door cameras and before Capital Improvement now, we are going out for a RFP [request for proposal] to install camera surveillance in each of our elementary schools and also enhance the old outdated analog system at Silas Deane in an effort to tie in directly to the Police Department and provide another layer of security. Security continues to be of the utmost importance. Society has gotten a little bit on the rough side these days. We continue to have buildings that are safe and secure for our kids so they can learn.

Councilor Bello asked where the second position would be.

Mr. Emmett informed her that it would be at the High School, they are looking to stagger that position. Mr. Even saw that was an area of weakness is the community entrance specifically at the end of the day. The door gets propped open, kids are in and out. We were looking for that second security guard. That full time position at the High School would be staggered. The individual would come in later in the morning and would stay later and be an extra level of support for after school activities. For example, in the fall, we have upwards of 400 students involved in sports; there are kids in and out. At night we have meetings, Adult Education, Park & Rec programs, athletic programs so building is used frequently. Once it is finally done and we can use all of the facilities. It will be like a 24/7 facility. We want to make sure we have physical support there to make sure our kids are safe.

Councilor Latina thanked them for all their hard work and asked what fiscal supplies or fiscal services are because last year it was like \$3,000 expenditure and for this fiscal year it jumped.

Mr. Kozaka explained that refers to the business office. That's our program code within the budget and a lot of the expenditures there other than salaries and some miscellaneous supplies, are the copier leases and postage throughout the district. That's in line with the uniform chart of accounts, it's in the correct object code now and once we get to 2017-18, it will level out between the two years as a comparison.

Councilor Latina asked with regard to transportation, do we take into account any sort of buffer because we may get caught with school transportation.

Mr. Emmett replied that we don't have any buffer built in at this point in time with the State. And he could build on what she just said and think about the Connecticut Education Network (CEN) which has the potential to be cut; that to us would be a \$30,000 hit. CEN provides us with our internet access, a

huge service and Connecticut is really state of the art in that regard. It's an item that was on the chopping block last year and they restored it. There is a need for that to continue because it will impact the Library, the Board of Education, the town, a big impact. So transportation will be the same issue. We don't know what we will end up getting from the State. So in terms of a buffer zone, we have tried to cut and get down to where we are at. Not a big buffer zone.

Councilor Latina asked that there was a thought that each school might get new furniture and was that in the budget.

Mr. Emmett responded no that had been eliminated.

Councilor Latina asked if this presentation could be put on the Board of Education website and Mr. Emmett indicated it would be available the following morning.

Councilor Rell asked if we would see any savings after all the work and construction has ceased but the electric use will still be going. Are the workers there from when school closes until 5 a.m. and that shift is done and then school comes on.

Mr. Emmett replied there are some contractors doing a second shift but not overnight. April vacation, there will be abatement going on so there will be contractors in which may go on all night in order to meet the schedule and depending upon what they find. Ultimately, right now as it stands, we don't have a heating and air conditioning system that is one unit that carries the whole building. We have new in some areas and we have old in some areas. We have the issue of the new system that is not calibrated yet so there is a lot of commissioning that needs to go on to make sure everything is running efficiently. In the long term he expects to see savings but right now it is too premature because they still have so much construction going on.

Mayor Montinieri commented that the Board of Education has worked hard to get the budget within reasonable limits.

Councilor Hurley stated that it was nice to see Diane Fitzpatrick from the Board and it would have been nice to see more Board members in attendance.

HEARING

RESOLUTION CONCERNING AN APPLICATION TO THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT TO OBTAIN LOCAL CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUNDS FOR RECONSTRUCTION AND PAVING OF DIX ROAD BETWEEN WOLCOTT HILL ROAD AND RIDGE ROAD.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments - Hearing declared closed. Moved to General Comments – any topics.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Sheila Wells of 336 Hartford Avenue and Betty Standish of 278 Hartford Avenue. Mrs. Wells in her capacity of President of the Wethersfield Garden Club read a letter requesting the Town to address the North border garden in Cove Park which was signed by 35 active members of the Garden Club.

Lee Sekas of 117 Wells Road wanted to remind everyone that on April 22nd the Nature Center will have its annual spring dance. It's an important part of their fundraising. Tickets are \$25.00 with a live band, a tea cup auction and refreshments from 7 p.m. to 11 p.m. *i.e. A night to remember.* If anyone buys five tickets the 6th one will be free on him. People- helping -people makes the community stronger.

Robert Young of 20 Coppermill Road wanted to wish Mr. Turner congratulations and good luck on his retirement. With regard to the budget and the current year projections that we never get to see which you really need. They use last year's budget against this year's projected budget. Last year's budget had a buffer in there of a lot of money. That was in a bloated budget and now you are comparing another budget to it. There are numerous sections where there are surpluses that are coming out now. They didn't come out before but now that things are getting tight you will start seeing where some of the money was over allocated. When they give their presentation in October, every year we would see a budget surplus with encumbrances going out which means they bought late, they bought just to spend the money. He has always said that the Board of Education doesn't have one set of books, they have two but he can't prove it. Something needs to be done with our Board of Education. For them to come in at a 2% increase, they are really coming in at probably 6. They should do the current year projection of 8 months' worth of actuals and project out the next four and that's where you start for the next year. This Niagara Bottling Company that is being proposed to build in Bloomfield who are getting a super deal through the MDC which the town is a member. In past years he is hearing from the water company that you have to conserve. What happens when this 1.8 million gallons per day is being sucked out of the reservoir. We will be told to conserve. That's a bad deal for us. The only ones who are going to make out are the executives at MDC and the rest of us will continue to pay.

Tom Mazarella of 600 Wolcott Hill Road commented that the MDC website says it's a non-profit organization. Wethersfield was one of first five towns when it was formed and out of the 8 towns, he has only seen comments from South Windsor, Bloomfield and West Hartford. Wethersfield as a town should make it be known to MDC officials that it is a bad deal. We have been told for at least 20 years to conserve water. Now they are looking for more ways to sell more water. Why are we paying for all these infrastructure improvements when our water prices have skyrocketed? If they want to sell two million gallons of water to Niagara go ahead but charge them the same rate we are paying. There should be something formal from the town to MDC. Regarding the Board of Education budget, he thinks you should tell the Board of Education that you have \$56 million to work with, so find a way to do it. You can't keep increasing the spending. Mr. Emmett says that the majority of the money is spent on salaries. So what are we going to do, we are going to add nine more positions this year. If you are contractually bound to paying these salaries and raises each year with all the benefits then the only thing you can do is limit the number of personnel that you are paying. Mr. Emmett said they are projecting 12 more students next year so you got 12 students and you got 9 positions. It makes no sense. Get some of the administrators back in the classroom. There are a lot of smart people there, so find a way to make it work. You should be demanding some proof of performance. The numbers are not going up they are stagnant. What improvements are we getting and are the kids getting a better education and is the school system really safer. You should be asking those questions.

COUNCIL REPORTS

Councilor Hemmann reported that the Shade Tree Commission met and they are working through pruning and the new tree climber started. Corey is very professional and very good at what he does. They will be working with Arbor Day agenda with Village Improvement Association which is coming up in April.

Councilor Latina reported that she went to the annual transportation meeting for the Wethersfield Advisory Committee for People with Disabilities and they spoke with the folks from Curtin which is the delivery company that offers some of the rides to the folks in town. The contract, though it states 12,000 rides, sometimes when we go under and they were kind enough to add in additional rides for field trips and such.

Councilor Martino reported that he attended the Senior Citizens Advisory Committee and they were discussing their May 12th event called KISS (Keep it Simple for Seniors). Topics to be discussed at this event include: comparing electric suppliers to lower utility bills, solar panels - pros and cons, reverse

mortgages - pros and cons and assisted living - pros and cons. Also UM Army (United Methodist Army) will be coming back to Wethersfield the week of July 11–15 to work on projects in town. This group is available to residents free of charge regardless of age for those who need small home repairs like painting walls, cleaning up yards, basements, building ramps for those with disabilities and most landscaping projects. They obtain the necessary building permits from the town. They have adult leaders and youths working together to help our residents. Contact Chris Taylor to fill out an application and to get on the list. The Public Works Committee met to review the mulch sealing process. We tabled it asking for the MSDS sheets so we could review those before making a decision for our roads. We also reviewed the roof maintenance contract. The current vendor is in his last year of his five year contract. We recommended that we look to have him come back and give us a quote to renewing him for another five years. We looked at some capital projects that are high ticketed items that must be done over the next couple of years like the underground tanks at Physical Services will have to be done by 2018 per DEEP and the artificial turf at Cottone Field which be coming up for replacement due to its life use.

Councilor Spinella reported that he attended the Youth Advisory Committee. They are trying to raise money for kids to go to camp this summer. May 4th there will be a fundraiser at Lucky Lou's at 6 p.m. It will be \$30.00 for camp scholarships for Social & Youth Services. Any checks should be made out to Social & Youth Services.

Deputy Mayor Barry reported that he attended Building Committee meeting. Items that were discussed: the budget projections we asked to go through where we think the project is going to end up. O&G conservatively budgeted it out what they thought realistically it would be at the end of the day. They feel it will be \$380,000 under budget and there was discussion about using some of the premiums on the bonding for next year just to be conservative in the sense that we may need money in December, January or February and we can't come back and do that then. Scheduling was also discussed. There will be some abatement work done over April vacation and then the last phase (5) was broken down to five or six subsets. The Tech Ed area, the old gym will be coming back on line at the end of August, the twelve classrooms (4 classrooms on each level) that are on northeast side will be have the abatement work done when school gets out in June which will be a 3 ½ to 4 month project so it will be mid-October to the end of October on that section. The old art rooms should be the end of September. A ton of work to be done over the summer. The auditorium will be on line next week for the first event when the SDMS will hold their play for parents. There have been comments about the size of the units on the roof and potentially screening those to make it more attractive. A subcommittee was set up to deal with that. The parking lot on the northwest side where the old softball field was will be started in September and finished by October. Commissioning will need to be done at the end of all this which the systems will be tested and we should see savings on electricity. Should get a bulk of the contractors out of there by October.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilor Hemmann suggested that from the perspective of the Council she would like to have some discussion about drafting a letter to go to the MDC, as one of the member towns, we should weigh in on the concerns. She is not one to support and is uneasy about the commitment; she doesn't think long term that we will be able to sustain it. Potential water issues they have had out that way and by selling water at that level to a for-profit company is not a wise use of our resources that the member towns and the towns that are also paying who get water from the MDC which sets us up to risk.

Mayor Montinieri responded that he talked to both our Commissioners and Chairman DiBella about it and there is a bill that passed that basically restricted the ability for the MDC to sell at the discounted rate under the proposal and its working its way through with respect to the Bloomfield project. It probably will not succeed at reduced rate based on that bill but it still has to be worked through. Chairman DiBella is saying with response a point that Mr. Mazzarella made about water restriction, apparently, water usage as a result of a lot of buying locally, private water supply usage has dropped significantly over the last

eight years. The reserve number has gone dramatically up and the MDC was approaching it and trying to find a creative way to entice somebody to become a large water user. He thinks that was the theory. The member towns have expressed concerns about it and the Commissioners agree with the concerns about selling it at a reduced rate. Though, it is being perceived as a business approach. He suggests that if folks get their thoughts in writing to the Town Manager, we can then draft something in response from our Council, to speak on behalf of Wethersfield. He doesn't think it will not go through at a reduced rate.

Councilor Hemmann stated that she was still concerned at any rate. We are stewards for the future and for our town. Assuming that this is going to continue into the future with this kind of a relationship with the MDC, she thinks it's important that we stand together as the member towns and express our concerns because things can change. We have gone through years where we have had droughts and we really did have to conserve and to put at risk the future. It may not be five years, it may not be two years, it could be ten or fifteen years where that risk becomes so high, that now you put yourself into a hole. We need to look as the member town as the steward of the future of this type of resource.

Mayor Montinieri replied that exact kind of commentary should go into any narrative that we come up with and to provide some of that to the Town Manager and we can come back as a Council and look at it before we send it to make sure it reflects the general sentiment, a narrative that we agree captures the essence of our concerns.

Councilor Hurley commented that Wethersfield won best contingent at the St. Patrick's Day parade. Following up on Deputy Mayor Barry's budget report on the building committee with regard to the 375 K that they said they would have left over and maybe put another 500K in contingency there. If we could get details on how what monies left over and how they got to the 375K that would be very helpful to make some decisions on the budget easier. With regard to his favorite subject the Weight Water's building, he was looking to find out more about it.

Mayor Montinieri replied that it hasn't started yet and we got the budget for the construction last week from Pinney Construction and is meeting this week to look at the details of it which came in at 6.47 to do the full construction so he is taking that number under consideration to look at some line items to bring it down a little bit. They did a walk through three weeks ago with Mr. Pinney and he had come down notably from the original estimates but he is looking to adding a second floor in the front to create more lease space to make the number work better for him. In the interim, the current owner got a cash offer on the property and he hasn't shared that with us. Based on the conversation he had with the property owner, he has to make a decision by April 1st and put money in play or he will pursue the other offer. The roof is leaking but the structure is fine and it would be great if the building could be saved.

Councilor Latina asked if anybody mentioned when they are planning on opening up the area that is gated off so when you go from the tennis court parking lot down to the fields because right now it is a mess. The gates that are down at the bottom on the side of the field are they ever available to be opened for drop off and pick up.

Deputy Mayor Barry indicated that the reality is that it is going to be the last part of what gets done. Those gates at the bottom he believed that there were issues with the neighbors about doing that and perhaps a discussion could be had about the need for a two or three month period that could be an alternative and worth a discussion.

Councilor Bello wished Town Engineer Mike Turner congratulations on his retirement and she thanked Councilor Hurley for all his work on the St. Patrick's Day parade and glad our town did so well. She indicated that she agrees with Councilor Hemmann and was not in support of the MDC sale of water to a private company.

Councilor Martino also thanked Councilor Hurley and the Irish Home Committee for all their work on organizing the parade. The town was well represented. He wished Town Engineer Mike Turner well for his success in retirement.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Town Manager Bridges thanked Town Engineer Mike Turner for his years of service with the town and he has been a tremendous asset and wished him all the best.

TOWN CLERK COMMUNICATION

Town Clerk Sassano stated that there will be a shredding event at the Community Center on May 12th from 12 p.m. to 2 p.m. We do have a Primary on April 26 for the Presidential Preference in Connecticut.

COUNCIL ACTION

ORDINANCES, RESOLUTIONS, APPOINTMENTS FOR INTRODUCTION

Councilor Martino moved to **“TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION CONCERNING AN APPLICATION TO THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT TO OBTAIN LOCAL CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUNDS FOR RECONSTRUCTION AND PAVING OF DIX ROAD BETWEEN WOLCOTT HILL ROAD AND RIDGE ROAD”**, seconded by Deputy Mayor Barry.

Town Manager Bridges stated that LoCIP is part of the money we put in the paving fund and usually we have to accumulate a couple years of dollars to do the bigger projects.

Town Engineer Mike Turner responded that typically we get about \$1800 to \$2,000 a year as a contribution from the State of Connecticut for LoCIP funding. We have historically applied that to a larger road reconstruction project so we don't diminish the amount of money that we have for normal milling and overlay work. In this case here, our Pavement Management, Software and our Capital Improvement Advisory Paving Committee recommend that we tackle Dix Road as our next project. It will take probably two years' worth of funding to get through this project and it will be a combination of installation of drainage where it is missing, reconstruction in the middle portion and then surface improvements at each end. We can actually phase the construction as we have done with Church Street and Goff Road where we let out a bid first for the storm drainage improvements which could go out to bid this summer and then we would have to wait for the money to catch up with us to go out for the remaining portion but he thought we get an allocation available to us from the state in March.

Vote: All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

OTHER BUSINESS

Councilor Bello moved to **“TO AUTHORIZE THE TOWN MANAGER TO APPLY FOR AND ACCEPT A STATE MATCHING GRANT FOR ELDERLY AND DISABLED DEMAND RESPONSIVE TRANSPORTATION (DIAL A RIDE EXPANSION GRANT) IN THE AMOUNT OF \$31,733 FOR WETHERSFIELD AND \$89,436 TOTAL AND SIGN A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH THE TOWNS OF NEWINGTON AND ROCKY HILL TO PROVIDE A TRI-TOWN MEDICAL TRANSPORTATION SERVICE”**, seconded by Councilor Spinella.

Kathy Bagley, Director of Social & Youth Services asked that Council approve them applying for and submitting a grant to CROG for what they call our expansion service of Dial-a-Ride. This is a consortium with Rocky Hill and Newington where we apply for a grant that provides expanded rides for medical

appointments for seniors in town in Wethersfield, Rocky Hill and Newington. Wethersfield serves as the administrator for the grant and has been in place for a long time.

Vote: All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted. The motion passed 9-0-0.

Councilor Spinella moved to **“TO ACCEPT A DISTRACTED DRIVING ENFORCEMENT GRANT FOR THE WETHERSFIELD POLICE DEPARTMENT”**, seconded by Councilor Bello.

Town Manager Bridges indicated that this is the grant that helps enhance enforcement for the cell phones users and the texters and we have done this for the past couple of years with great results.

Vote: After discussion all Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

BIDS

Councilor Martino moved to **“TO SELECT GARRITY ASPHALT RECLAIMING INC. FOR MILLING SERVICES AND ACCEPT THE STATE CONTRACT BID PRICING”**, seconded by Deputy Mayor Barry.

Town Engineer Mike Turner explained that this state bid is actually a two year state bid so we are using last year's prices and his recommendation is to make the award to Garrity to continue their work that they started. We have a current purchase order balance with them of \$25,000 and we would like to increase it by \$40,000 to \$65,000 which is the amount we need for this spring's paving program. Last year we had had an issue with Costello and Garrity was able to step in and hold the state unit prices so we would like to continue working with them.

Vote: All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

Councilor Martino moved to **“TO ACCEPT THE STATE BID PROCESS FROM TILCON FOR PAVING SERVICES”**, seconded by Deputy Mayor Barry.

Town Engineer Mike Turner explained that this is a new state bid that came out effective in April. Tilcon is our low bidder and when we factor in everything, we have a current purchase order with Tilcon \$217,000 so we would look to increase it by \$182,454 to have \$400,000 available to us for the spring program. We are actually receiving a de-escalation cost per ton this season; for asphalt we pay by ton.

Vote: All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

Deputy Mayor Barry moved to **“TO APPROVE VIRCO INVOICE #'S 8115987 AND 8115988 FOR FURNITURE FOR THE WETHERSFIELD HIGH SCHOOL RENOVATION PROJECT FOR THE TOTAL OF \$390,753.66”**, seconded by Councilor Martino.

Fred Bushey, Sally Katz and Town Engineer Mike Turner stated they were there to pass on the Building Committee's recommendation for the furniture purchase for phase 4 and 5 which will essentially finish the purchase of all the classroom furniture that will complete the building. This is off of a state bid. They will not be purchased all at once but they will draw as each classroom comes online so will be purchased in phases. The furniture was one area where we came in under budget.

Vote: All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

MINUTES

Councilor Bello moved **“TO APPROVE THE MEETING MINUTES OF MARCH 7, 2016”**, seconded by Councilor Spinella.

Vote: All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Robert Young of 20 Coppermill Road commented that the Board of Education is now proposing working with a new chart of accounts. It is like you keep tracking this information and then they change how they are doing things; he thinks it's not good. He understands they might want to condense line items but maybe they need a conversion table. The replacement of the artificial turf which has been there for some time but there must be a load of money there to pay for that instead of going out to borrow for that. It should have been a pay to play type of thing and he would hope you look into that. The State of Connecticut is now borrowing now another 550 million dollars. That's not chump change. Paul Doyle sent him an email about some kind of monies he fought for and he got 600 million dollars to be spread out and that Wethersfield was going to get \$400,000; he thought maybe that was where the money was going when Town Engineer Mike Turner mentioned that exact figure. Connecticut needs to hone down our spending. His CNG payment goes to Chelsea, MA; his Eversource payment goes to Dallas, TX; his Hartford Courant goes to Phoenix, AZ - nothing in Connecticut and these are major companies.

Catherine Boyes of 20 Westlook Road commented the only familiar face she sees is Councilor Hemmann since her last attendance at a Council meeting. She thinks we do need to think about the future; her MDC water bill is 30% usage and the rest of it is a fee. She agrees that we need to find a way to stay within our budget with the money that we have if we want people to stay in Wethersfield. With regard to the Chart of Accounts why can't we have an apple to apple comparison so that there would be a way to the future, with what was and what is now. Does old furniture get recycled; could we get a tax benefit for donating it; could a vocational school use some components for some of their classes; just food for thought.

ADJOURNMENT

At 9:10 p.m., Councilor Spinella moved **"TO ADJOURN THE MEETING"** seconded by Councilor Bello. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

Dolores G. Sassano
Town Clerk

Approved by Vote of Council 7-0-0
(Councilors Hurley and Latina Absent)
April 4, 2016